

REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated July 1, 2004. Claims 1-31 are presented for examination, of which Claims 1, 10, 19, 22, 24, 27 and 29-31 are in independent form. Claims 1, 9, 10, 18-20, 22, 24, 25, 27 and 29-31 have been amended to define still more clearly what Applicants regard as their invention. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

The title has been amended to make it more descriptive, as required in the Office Action.

In the Office Action dated July 1, 2004, Claims 1-31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious from U.S. Patent 6,628,413 (Lee) in view of U.S. Patent 6,351,317 (Sasaki et al.).

As is described in the specification, the present invention relates to techniques for printing information received over a network. In printing information received (for example, over the Internet), it is normal that the same processing is applied in preparation for printing, regardless of the type of image file in question and of its resolution and the like. As a result, the user does not necessarily obtain the full benefit of the image quality in the received file. Moreover, there are inconveniences associated with the slowness of the whole process in some

instances, as once a printer has been instructed to print information being received from the network, the printer is typically unavailable for any other work until the entire file has been received and printed.

Claim 1 is directed to an image forming apparatus which is connected to a network and forms an image on the basis of image data acquired from the network. The apparatus comprises input means (reading means performing steps S1 and S21 in Figs. 4 and 8, for example) for inputting information that pertains to image data. Submission means (S3 and S23) submit an image request to the network on the basis of the input information, and storage means (S8 and S25, and an image memory 2) store image data sent in response to the image request. Parameter setting means (see page 23, lines 5-10 and 13-17, page 34, lines 16-1, and page 34, line 24, through page 35, line 1) set color-process parameters corresponding to a type of image data stored in the storage means, and image processing means (S10, S12, S27 and S29) control execution of an image process corresponding to the stored image data using the color-process parameters. Image forming means (S11 and S28) form an image on the basis of the processed image data.<sup>1</sup>

*Lee* relates to a Java printer that can open and print a document specified by an

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<sup>1</sup> It is of course to be understood that the claim scope is not limited by the details of any of the embodiments referred to.

appropriate URL. The *Lee* printer permits interactive modification of page layouts, and can monitor print requests. In addition, that printer is configurable using a browser interface. Nonetheless, Applicants submit that nothing has been found, or pointed out, in *Lee* that would teach or suggest either the parameter setting means or the image processing means recited in Claim 1.

*Sasaki* relates to a printer which receives a description of URL from a client, accesses a server according to the URL and fetches HTML from the server and prints it. In this process, the printer identifies a tag included in HTML and selects a specified process to display or print data indicated by the tag. The HTML can include a plurality of types of image, such as JPEG, GIF, XBM, DIB and so on. These images data are different from each other in the number of colors, algorithm of compression and other properties (column 15, lines 44-56).

Applicants submit, however, that nothing has been found in *Sasaki* that would teach or suggest setting color-process parameters corresponding to a type of image data and controlling to execute an image process corresponding to the stored image data using such set color-process parameters. Even if *Sasaki* and *Lee* are combined as proposed in the Office Action, therefore, and even assuming that the proposed combination would be a permissible one, the result would not meet the terms of Claim 1, and that claim is accordingly believed to be

clearly allowable over those two patents.

Independent Claims 10 and 29 are corresponding method and memory-medium claims, are deemed allowable for at least the reasons just given with regard to Claim 1.

Independent Claim 19 is directed to an image forming apparatus (corresponding to the third embodiment, although not limited by the details disclosed for that embodiment) that comprises input means (reading on, for example, console 6) for inputting a data acquisition request for a server on a network, and data acquisition means for accessing individual servers on the network in parallel, in a case where a plurality of such data acquisition requests for the individual respective data from the individual servers (page 41, line 20, through page 42, line 8). Image data generation means (S32 in Fig. 11) generate image formation data on the basis of the acquired data, and image formation means (S33) form an image on the basis of the generated image formation data. In addition, control means control the image data generation means to generate the image formation data in an order in which said data acquisition means has acquired the respective acquired data from the individual servers, and to control the image forming means to form an image in order in which the generated image formation data are generated (page 48, line 16, through page 51, line 2).

Similarly, independent Claim 22 is directed to an image forming apparatus (again, reading on but not limited by the details of the third embodiment) that comprises input means for

inputting a data acquisition request for a server on a network, and data acquisition means for accessing individual servers on the network in parallel, in a case where a plurality of such data acquisition request for the individual servers are inputted, and for acquiring respective data from the individual servers. Image data generation means generate image formation data corresponding to each server on the basis of the data acquired from the server, and do so in the order in which the data were acquired by the data acquisition means from the individual servers. Image forming means form an image on the basis of the generated image formation data, and control means control the image forming means to form an image in the order of generation of the generated image formation data.

Initially, it is believed to be clear that Claims 19 and 22 are allowable over *Lee* taken alone (from the Office Action, it is understood that the Examienr agrees with Applicants on this point). The Office Action cites *Sasaki* as teaching controlling image data generation means to generate image information data and image forming means to form an image in turn from data. Applicants, however, find themselves unable to agree with this reading of *sasaki*. The *Sasaki* apparatus spools HTML data or a description of a URL from a client into a hard disk 207 and reads out them in sequence and converts them to print data. Nothing in *Sasaki*, however, relates to a case in which a plurality of data acquisition requests for individual servers are inputted, the individual servers are accessed on the network in parallel, and respective data are acquired from

the individual servers. As a result, it is not seen how anything in *Sasaki* does, or could, teach or suggest controlling to generate print data (image formation data) in an order in which the acquired data has been acquired from individual servers, as recited in Claims 19 and 22, or to form an image in an order of generation of print data generated in this fashion, as recited in those two claims. Even if *Sasaki* and *Lee* are combined as proposed in the Office Action, therefore, the result would not meet the terms of either of these claims.

Independent Claims 24, 27, 30 and 31 are corresponding method and memory-medium claims, and are also deemed allowable by virtue of at least the arguments just presented with regard to Claims 19 and 22.

A review of the other art of record has failed to reveal anything which, in Applicants' opinion, would remedy the deficiencies of the art discussed above, as references against the independent claims herein. Those claims are therefore believed patentable over the art of record.

The other claims in this application are each dependent from one or another of the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual reconsideration of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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